

2012 Diversity Visa Lottery

Dear Consul,

I just heard that someone can win a green card to the United States in some kind of lottery. How does this work and does it cost any money?

Jose from Rushville

The Diversity Visa Lottery Program is the only official lottery program for immigrant visas to the United States. The annual U.S. Government-sponsored program offers 55,000 immigrant visas to people from countries with relatively low rates of immigration, including Trinidad and Tobago. Registration for the next program cycle begins at noon Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on Tuesday, October 5, 2010, and ends at noon Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Wednesday, November 3, 2010.

All applications must be submitted electronically. Applicants may apply at www.dvlottery.state.gov anytime during the registration period. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the last week of the registration period to enter, as heavy demand may result in website delays. No entries will be accepted after noon on November 3, 2010.

There is no fee to apply. Diversity Visa lottery winners only pay a fee to the U.S. Embassy when a case is being processed.

After applications are submitted, a random lottery drawing chooses selectees for Diversity Visas. Every selectee is then invited to go through an interview process at the U.S. Embassy to see if they qualify to immigrate to the U.S. The program requirements are simple, but strict. Most notably, applicants must have the equivalent of a U.S. high school degree (at least five CXC passes in Trinidad and Tobago) or work experience in a job that requires at least two years of formal training. Applicants who apply for a Diversity Visa but do not have the required education or training experience will not qualify to immigrate to the U.S. Applicants should check the requirements at www.dvlottery.state.gov to make sure they qualify before applying.

In this year's program, those who submit entries may check the status of entries online and determine whether their entries are selected or not selected. When you register, you must print and save your confirmation page because you will need this information to check the status of your entry. Successful entrants will no longer receive notification letters by mail.

For detailed information about entry requirements, along with frequently asked questions about the program, please see the instructions for the DV-2012 Diversity Visa lottery at http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1318.html.

For more detailed information, and additional tips on applying for both immigrant and nonimmigrant visas at the U.S. Embassy in Port of Spain, please visit our website at <http://trinidad.usembassy.gov> or email us at consularpos@state.gov.